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status of women does not seem conclusive, in view of the fact that a passably equivalent economic situation in other communities, where race, religion, or social traditions have been different, has not worked out like results. But here again the discussion throws an effective light upon the questions in hand, though it is perhaps to be rated as a side light. One is somewhat at a loss to account for the very high degree of efficacy imputed to the Christian religion—an intrusive cult—in Germanic and English culture, in a discussion whose first, if not sole, postulate is that the economic situation shapes the cultural sequence without help or hindrance from any outside spiritual force or from any antecedent tradition or tenet. And still, inconsistent as it may be, his handling of this intrusive cult as a formative element in English spiritual life is by no means the least effective of Mr. Patten's work.

On one point at least, of general bearing, Mr. Patten's conclusion seems blind to those who do not see all these matters through his eyes. In chapter iii (p. 188-189) and again in his concluding remarks (p. 378) it is broadly stated that the English have shown a conspicuous incapacity for the development of political institutions. This raises a question as to what may be meant by a capacity for political life—in that economic relation with which Mr. Patten is avowedly occupied—beyond such an adequate adjustment to their economic situation as Mr. Patten shows the English to be eminently possessed of.

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Die Feldgemeinschaft in Russland. Ein Beitrag zur Sozialgeschichte und zur Kenntnis der gegenwärtigen wirtschaftlichen Lage des russischen Bauernstandes. Von Wladimir Gr. Simkhowitsch. Pp. xv, 399. Jena: Fischer, 1898.

The work of Dr. Simkhowitsch coming as it does simultaneously with the news of another peasant famine in Russia, is very opportune indeed. This is the second work devoted to the subject of Russian agriculture which comes from a Russian student making his doctorate abroad. Like its predecessor ("The Economics of the Russian Village," by I. A. Hourvich, published as a doctor's dissertation by Columbia University), it aims at doing away with two erroneous notions which seem to have struck deep root in the minds of the foreign public. These are first, that the Russian village commune, the so-called "mir," with its supposed economic equality of the members composing it, is a myth; second, that the famines which have been succeeding one another with such remarkable regularity during the

present decade are not due to any unfavorable combinations of meteorologic and climatic conditions, but are the natural result of the backward state of Russian agriculture due partly to the remnants of the old "mir," partly to the general narrow-minded, suicidal fiscal policy of the Russian Government.

The plan of Dr. Simkhowitsch's work is admirable. Realizing that the unusually exhaustive and voluminous Russian literature on the subject has so far remained almost a complete *terra incognita* to the western world he has executed his work on far broader lines than would be necessary otherwise. The work has been made largely historical, but the history is in the main economic. Once in a while the author allows himself a digression from that rule and goes into historical and ethnographical details which might be dispensed with without injury to the whole; though it must be admitted that to the non-Russian reader this will serve rather as an additional attraction, since every such deviation is but another stroke in the general outline of Russian national life so peculiar and strange to the foreign mind.

The book is divided in four parts. In Part I we learn of the system of land "ownership by shares" (Anteilbesitz) which was prevalent in Russia during the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, and came as a result of the splitting up of the old patriarchal family. It contains in conclusion a very interesting chapter on the origin of serfdom and on its final incorporation into Russian law at the end of the sixteenth and during the seventeenth centuries.

Part II is devoted to the village commune, the "mir," and shows very conclusively how the supposed socialistic institution was inaugurated during the period of serfdom through the efforts of the landlords, and how it had been perpetuated after the emancipation by the government. The economic causes which were at the bottom of the policy of the landlords and of the government are gone into fully, but space forbids us to discuss them.

Part III gives a complete description of the forms and functions of the "mir," such as the principles of periodic repartition of land, of financial responsibility of the commune for each of its members, of the communal use of the pasture, wood and meadow lands, etc.

The fourth and last part of the book is devoted to an historical and critical examination of the act of emancipation and subsequent agrarian legislation of the Russian Government. The causes of the emancipation, the methods of carrying it out, and the effects on the welfare of the peasantry are fully discussed.

The author tells us in the introduction that he entered upon his work fully convinced of the vitality and necessity of the "mir," but before he concluded his work he had come to the opposite point

of view. His principal conclusions may be summed up in the following: "The dwarfish farms, the direct result of the village commune . . . necessarily doom the Russian peasant to chronic starvation. The only way out of the abnormal condition lies through the transition to a capitalistic form of production, through the abolition of the village commune and through the emancipation of the peasant from the thralldom in which he is kept."

In this conclusion Dr. Simkhowitsch does not stand alone, he has only told the outside world what has been repeated over and over again in Russia during the last few years by nearly every writer and economist of note who has looked into the subject carefully and dispassionately.

While Dr. Simkhowitsch's work is not in any way original, it is probably the only up-to-date book in a foreign language which makes an attempt at an exhaustive and systematic treatment of the subject, and for wealth of material and for clearness of presentation, it can not be too strongly recommended to all those who wish to get a comprehensive view of this most vital problem in the largest empire of the civilized world.

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The American Revolution. Part i, 1766-1776. By the RT. HON. SIR GEORGE O. TREVELYAN, Bart. 8vo. Pp. xiii, 434. Price, \$3.00. New York : Longmans, Green & Co., 1899.

Sir George Trevelyan is already well known to American readers as the author of the "Life and Letters of Lord Macaulay" and of the "Early History of Charles James Fox." Possibly no living Englishman is better qualified to tell the story of the American Revolution than is he, and certainly no English statesman was more closely connected with that movement than was Fox. "The story of Fox between 1774 and 1782 is inextricably interwoven with the story of the American Revolution," declares the author. "During that part of the great drama, which was enacted within the walls of Parliament, Fox was never off the stage; and when there he played a conspicuous, and, as time went on, confessedly the leading part." It is because "what was done and spoken at Westminster cannot be rightly explained, nor the conduct of British public men fairly judged, without a clear and reasonably detailed account of that which occurred contemporaneously beyond the Atlantic" that the author entitles the second part of his life of Fox "The American Revolution."